

# **Report: Internship experiences**

## **BLUE SEASON BALI, Bali, Indonesia**



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International Business

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# **1 INTRODUCTION**

In reference with my “International business administration” studies at Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences and my double degree with ARCADA Helsinki, I successfully completed my internship of five months at BLUE SEASON BALI in Sanur, which is a part of Denpasar in Bali, Indonesia.

BLUE SEASON BALI is one of the most successful operating dive centers in Indonesia with its headquarter based in Sanur and another shop based in the north of the island in Menjangan. I was located at the main center in Sanur, Indonesia which has around 60 employees.

The internship period was scheduled from August 18<sup>th</sup> 2014 until January 4<sup>th</sup> 2015.

In the following report I will talk about my experiences and give a brief overview of my time by gaining experience by living and working abroad and about my internship tasks and how those experiences made during my internship supplemented my studies.

## **2 PREPARATION OF THE INTERNSHIP**

The decision to do my internship abroad was the first one I made. And this was followed by a broad review of potential open internship positions. I was lucky to found a wide offer of different kind of jobs. My heart was instantly attached to a position as a Marketing Director Assistant in the Scuba Diving. I have always been quiet interested in the industry around water sports, caused by the way I grew up with sailing.

The job interview took place via Skype with the Marketing director. She made me feel comfortable and welcomed. It was a nice and peaceful atmosphere within interview, which took around an hour.

I received the approval of my application just a couple of days later and I was realizing the proper challenge I have to face in just a couple of months over-

seas. The next steps were the organization of the flight tickets, the visa applications, the accommodation in Bali.

The Visa application was pretty easy to go through with the Indonesian Embassy in Frankfurt am Main. To apply for the social visa for cultural exchange I just needed my flight tickets, copies of my passport, a copy of the bank transfer, some passfotos, a certification of bond from my parents, an insurance formulas and some agreements to respect the culture and the society. I took around 14 days to get the extendable Visa for six months. It costs in total around 200 – 250 €.

I organized my accommodation with lovely helping hands from work. They reserved a lovely little apartment for me and after a month of looking around I found a place which suited my needs more. But for the start I really appreciated the help of my office to find me a place to stay. I stayed in a homestay like the call it. It means a family builds not just their apartment. They build a couple of more and rent them out per night or for long term. They take care of the rooms every week and are just next door if any problems accurse. It's a quit common way to live in Indonesia.

Therefore everything I was able to plan from Germany was set up and I was ready to fly over to the island I was about to live for my next months.

### **3 LIVING AND WORKING ON AN ISLAND IN INDONESIA**

The majority of people living on Bali are very open-minded, friendly and helpful. Tourists or people who are new to the city barely face problems of integration. The Indonesian culture is incredibly giving an warm hearted. Balinese are warmly welcoming any religion, culture and nationality, which makes life easy in terms of living with the people. As long you show them respect for the different lifestyles (Hindus, Muslims, Christians, etc.) you get treated in the most lovely way.

The financial situation for a western person, getting supported by a scholarship from the ERASMUS program and other financial sources, is easy to say at least.

The EURO has in comparison to the Indonesian Rupiah a very high value. My average expenses for one month were around 350 € for living costs, food and necessary products.

Summarizing I would never want to miss the life in Bali and all the fun things which this island offers to his residents. I could effort so many things I probably would have never done in other settings. I did three dive courses: The Open Water Course (first certification), my Advanced Open Water (second certification), my Rescue Course (third certification) and following my internship I did my Divemaster, which is the first professional stage for a diver. If you keep an eye on your finances and manage your money well, you can enjoy the exciting life to the fullest in a completely different culture with many different religious aspects. Next to the typical sightseeing hotspots the island offers a lot more for insiders like all different kinds of food and markets, relaxing on the beaches and in the rain forest or between the Padi- Ricefields or having a boat day Snorkeling in one of the most beautiful areas for marine life. Surfing, Standup Paddle board, Jetski, Kitesurfing, White Water Rafting, Water Amusement Parks, Monkey and Bird forest, Vulcano Trekking and Mountain Bike Riding are just a few things I was able to try in Bali.

In terms of working on an island like Bali I noticed a couple of differences to my comfortable zone of German employee status. Working is more like a socializing opportunity for a lot of the people. For sure the employees need the money, but efficiency has a completely different face than in Germany. To chat and get to know your colleagues requires a big part of the day. This is part of their culture and I had to learn to adapt and to fit into this to integrate myself. After a couple of weeks I understood the necessity of this behavior more and more. People do not have to work too hard to effort their rent and food, but they need a relaxed and familial family to feel comfortable to come to work. Indonesian do not like to be pushed to do stuff or more stuff than they are just too. They feel offended

and would not show up to work the next day. In terms of responsibilities, employers have to consider this attitude. The daily hours of work often exceed the known 7AM to 5PM professional rule of thumb. Divemasters and the morning shift of the administrative staff would come into work at 6AM to 6.30AM and leave around 5PM: There does not exist specific office hours, because the company works as a family and the people stay as long as everything is done. For a western person the daily schedule feels kind of inefficient but does make a lot of sense in terms of taking care of the familial atmosphere. Overtime does not count as potential base of extra payment or vacation days.

Overall there is not too few employment security and guaranty. Within my time at BLUE SEASON BALI I have seen a couple of people being fired from one day to another without a warning. They arrived at the office in the morning and packed up their stuff an hour later. This is the easy going culture and attitude towards the other direction.

As much fun living in Bali can be, the working life is the real deal, in terms of finding the right balance between western attitude and the sensitivity towards the local employees. Bad payment which causes financial struggle from paycheck to paycheck, no employment security and the constant fear of being fired puts enormous pressure on employees at times. It would be wrong to underestimate this factor of hard work and assume Bali is nothing but great to live at.

#### **4 MY INTERNSHIP – TASKS AND EXPERIENCES**

During my internship I was mainly working in the Marketing department of the actual dive school. BLUE SEASON BALI owns three more stores, a retail center, another dive school in the north of the island and a snorkel shop. Next to daily tasks in this main department I also enjoyed opportunities like joining the Public relations team for a couple of days or taking a look into other departments like HR, Sales, and Finances.

My team in the Marketing department included the marketing director, her first assistant, a sales person, an underwater videographer and another intern be-

sides me. During my five months stay, the director and her assistant left on wish of the owners the company and the sales person took the supervision of the team. It was a tough time to go through, because the main understanding for marketing and especially online marketing came now from my side. This case occurred for the last 2 months of my internship. My manager and I grew really strong as a team of two, because the other intern finished earlier than I did, our communication was amazing and I felt fully included, not just as a position of intern but also as a fully responsible team member. I got accepted from the whole team, from the operational manager, to the reservation stuff, housekeeping, divemasters and instructors. They all consider themselves as a big family and at some point they showed me , they see me as a part of it. Leaving for me was a very hard part and I promised them and myself to come back to Bali, Sanur, to look after my new family.

Since we had to run the whole department by ourselves, I took over a lot more tasks and responsibilities than the standard intern tasks of:

- organizing the briefings in the morning to schedule the day
- taking care of the social media status in Facebook Google +, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest, LinkedIn
- monthly Social Media Progress Analysis and Reports
- writing offer set ups for our online clients, providing all necessary information which needed for the new website
- customer relations and trip advisor focus
- charity projects and event management for project aware
- team building activities once a week
- sales training in a hotel twice a week
- Underwater and surface photography to wide out the database for usage
- Online competitor analysis with focus on different services
- Price policy research
- And many daily issues to solve

Overall I consider myself really lucky to be able to learn and experience a lot more than I usually would have with my standard intern tasks. I really enjoyed working with my supervisor and growing as a team.

When our new intern joined the team at the end of my internship, I was in charge of training her and sharing all knowledge that I gained within my really intense period of internship.

With my internship at BLUE SEASON BALI I did not just get the experience of working in a huge dive school with costumers from all over the world, but I also was able to apply my theoretical knowledge of my studies to the real world and working environment. Applying calculations we theoretically practiced at University to real numbers of sold services and profit visualizes the importance of my studies. Marketing aspects and customer service and customer behavior in terms of different cultures were clarified in actual meetings, and email exchange with costumers. The overall picture of how the diving economy is connected globally and how everything depends on connections and the skills of speaking different languages, got a completely different value for me.



## 5 EVALUATION OF THE INTERNSHIP

Summarizing I could not have been luckier and glad to be able to experience the split between working and living on an island in a world which is considered as the third world. Culturalwise I felt in the right place and the right time. Taking a look into the scuba diving environment and experiencing the daily challenges of a company which deals with international costumers of different cultures massively supported my theoretical knowledge of international business and cultural studies.

Due to the fact that my manager and I were running the department without any help in the end I had the great opportunity to take over more responsibilities and tasks made my internship unforgettable and I have learned a lot from these five months overseas.

I am still in steady contact to the whole team and they became a family to me. I am really thinking of joining the company as a paid employee because I know the employees and the scene on the whole island.

Overall I have had the best time of my life on Bali, finding a passion I haven't experienced so far and I would never want to miss a second of this this fantastic experience.

